United Nations E/CN.15/2014/6

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
14 February 2014

Original: English

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
Twenty-third session
Vienna, 12-16 May 2014
Item 8 of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides a brief overview of the ongoing and future preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, including the organization of the regional preparatory meetings for the Congress and the finalization of a discussion guide for the regional preparatory meetings and the Congress itself. The report also contains information on actions required of the Commission in reviewing the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress.

* E/CN.15/2014/1.

V.14-01093 (E) 200214 210214

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/185, entitled "Follow-up to the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and preparations for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice", in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure proper follow-up to the resolution and to report thereon to the Assembly through the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its twenty-third session.

II. Background

A. Venue and dates of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

2. Pursuant to the offer of the Government of Qatar to act as host to the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the General Assembly decided, in its resolution 68/185, to hold the Thirteenth Congress in Doha from 12 to 19 April 2015, with pre-Congress consultations to be held on 11 April 2015. The Assembly also decided that the high-level segment of the Thirteenth Congress would be held during the first two days of the Congress in order to allow Heads of State or Government and Government ministers to focus on the main theme of the Congress[1] and to enhance the possibility of generating useful feedback.

B. Outcome of the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

3. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/119, subparagraph 2 (h), each United Nations congress on crime prevention and criminal justice should adopt a single declaration. Moreover, in its resolution 68/185, the Assembly decided that, in accordance with its resolution 56/119, the Thirteenth Congress would adopt a single declaration that would contain the major recommendations reflecting and emerging from the deliberations of the high-level segment, as well as the discussion of the agenda items and the workshops. The declaration will be submitted for the consideration of the Commission at its twenty-fourth session, in 2015.

C. Documentation

4. In its resolution 68/185, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a plan for the documentation for the Thirteenth Congress, in consultation with the extended Bureau of the Commission.

[1] In its resolution 67/184, the General Assembly decided that the main theme of the Thirteenth Congress would be "Integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and public participation".

Accordingly, the Secretariat circulated to the extended Bureau the provisional documentation forecast for the Thirteenth Congress. That forecast is shown below:

(a) Basic documents:

(i) Reports of the four regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress;

(ii) Working papers on each of the substantive items on the provisional agenda for the Thirteenth Congress;[2]

(iii) Working papers on each of the topics of the workshops to be held within the framework of the Thirteenth Congress;[3]

(b) Background documents:

(i) Discussion guide on the substantive items on the provisional agenda and the workshop topics of the Thirteenth Congress (A/CONF.222/PM.1);

(ii) National papers and reports submitted by Governments;

(iii) Reports submitted by entities of the United Nations system, including specialized agencies, and by regional institutes for the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders, affiliated with the United Nations;

(iv) Reports submitted by intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and

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[2] In its resolution 67/184, the General Assembly approved the following provisional agenda for the Thirteenth Congress, finalized by the Commission at its twenty-first session:

1. Opening of the Congress.
2. Organizational matters.
3. Successes and challenges in implementing comprehensive crime prevention and criminal justice policies and strategies to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and to support sustainable development.
4. International cooperation, including at the regional level, to combat transnational organized crime.
5. Comprehensive and balanced approaches to prevent and adequately respond to new and emerging forms of transnational crime.
6. National approaches to public participation in strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice.
7. Adoption of the report of the Congress.

[3] In its resolution 67/184, the General Assembly decided that the following issues would be considered in workshops within the framework of the Thirteenth Congress:

(a) Role of the United Nations standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice in support of effective, fair, humane and accountable criminal justice systems: experiences and lessons learned in meeting the unique needs of women and children, in particular the treatment and social reintegration of offenders;

(b) Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants: successes and challenges in criminalization, in mutual legal assistance and in effective protection of witnesses and trafficking victims;

(c) Strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice responses to evolving forms of crime such as cybercrime and trafficking in cultural property, including lessons learned and international cooperation;

(d) Public contribution to crime prevention and raising awareness of criminal justice: experiences and lessons learned.

Social Council and contributions by individual experts on the roster of the Secretariat, dealing with specific questions in their areas of concern.

D. Rules of procedure

5. Rule 63 of the rules of procedure for United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice provides as follows:

> "After the completion of each Congress, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice shall make appropriate recommendations to the Economic and Social Council for such amendments to the present rules as it may deem necessary."

6. The rules of procedure will be made available to the Commission at its twenty-third session. In the absence of any amendments, the Thirteenth Congress will be conducted in accordance with the current rules of procedure,[4] supplemented by the guidelines contained in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 56/119.

III. Regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress

7. In its resolution 68/185, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to proceed with the organization of the four regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress and to make available the necessary resources for the participation of the least developed countries in those meetings, in accordance with past practice.

8. Also in its resolution 68/185, the General Assembly urged Governments to actively participate in the regional preparatory meetings, where appropriate, and to invite their representatives to examine the substantive items on the agenda and the topics of the workshops of the Thirteenth Congress and to make action-oriented recommendations for consideration by the Congress.

9. At the time of submission of the present report, the following regional preparatory meetings had been held:

(a) Asia and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting, held in Bangkok from 22 to 24 January 2014;

(b) Western Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting, held in Doha from 3 to 5 February 2014.

10. At the time of submission of the present report, the following regional preparatory meetings were scheduled to be held:

(a) Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting, to be held in San José from 19 to 21 February 2014;

(b) African Regional Preparatory Meeting, to be held in Addis Ababa from 9 to 11 April 2014.

[4] To be adopted by the Thirteenth Congress under item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda.

11. The two regional preparatory meetings for the Asia and Pacific region and the Western Asian region agreed on action-oriented recommendations for consideration when preparing the draft declaration to be submitted to the Thirteenth Congress. The participants in those meetings highlighted that such recommendations would require concerted action at the subregional, regional and international levels, with a view to strengthening cooperation in respect of criminal justice policies and procedures. The reports of those two regional preparatory meetings[5] are brought to the attention of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its twenty-third session. A similar outcome was expected from the regional preparatory meetings described in paragraph 9 above.[6]

IV. Discussion guide for the regional preparatory meetings and the Thirteenth Congress

12. In its resolution 68/185, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to finalize the discussion guide in a timely manner, taking into account the recommendations of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as well as additional comments and feedback from Member States, in order to enable the regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress to be held as early as possible in 2014.

13. Having brought the draft discussion guide to the attention of the Commission at its twenty-second session, the Secretariat finalized its content, based on the comments received, translated it into all the official languages of the United Nations and made it available to the regional preparatory meetings for the Thirteenth Congress as part of their documentation (A/CONF.222/PM.1).

V. Other substantive and procedural preparatory arrangements for the Thirteenth Congress

14. In its resolution 68/185, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to appoint a Secretary-General and an Executive Secretary of the Thirteenth Congress, in accordance with past practice, to perform their functions under the rules of procedure for United Nations congresses on crime prevention and criminal justice. In line with the practice followed in previous congresses, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has been appointed as Secretary-General of the Congress and John Sandage, Director of the Division for Treaty Affairs of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), has been appointed Executive Secretary.

15. The host country website of the Thirteenth Congress[7] was launched officially on 4 February 2014. It includes all substantive, procedural and logistical information on the Congress and will be updated regularly in the lead-up to the event.

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[5] A/CONF.222/RPM.1/1 and A/CONF.222/RPM.2/1.

[6] The reports on those meetings are to be issued under the symbols A/CONF.222/RPM.3/1 and A/CONF.222/RPM.4/1.

[7] www.moi.gov.qa/UNCCPCJDoha.

16. The UNODC website on the Thirteenth Congress[8] is fully operational and all related documentation is posted as soon as it becomes available.

17. A briefing about the status of preparations for the Thirteenth Congress and action to be taken in that regard by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its twenty-third session was given to the extended Bureau at its meeting held during the twenty-second session of the Commission and another will be provided at its meeting held during the twenty-third session.

18. A briefing for permanent missions on the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress was held in New York in October 2013. It was organized by the Secretariat, together with representatives of the host country, at the time of the consideration of the agenda item on crime prevention and criminal justice by the Third Committee of the General Assembly.

VI. Future action by the Secretariat

19. Following the offer made by the Government of Qatar to host the Thirteenth Congress, UNODC will undertake a planning mission in June 2014. The purposes of the planning mission will be to establish contact with the competent authorities of the host country and to exchange views on the most practical and cost-effective ways to ensure efficient preparations (substantive and organizational) for the Congress; to visit the proposed Congress venue and ascertain how the facilities could be used in an efficient manner to meet the requirements of the Congress; to provide the host country authorities with information on United Nations policy and practice in organizing conferences away from the established headquarters of United Nations entities; and to review other arrangements required for the Congress.

20. It is envisaged that the consultations between the host Government and UNODC for the finalization and signing of the host country agreement, and its annexes, for the Thirteenth Congress will be completed by July 2014. The agreement will provide the legal framework and will contain detailed administrative and logistical arrangements and requirements for the Congress, including the estimated differential cost of the event, which will be borne by the Government. If required, a second planning mission to Doha will be scheduled to take place in October 2014.

21. In the second half of 2014, the Secretariat will work on the working papers for each of the items on the provisional agenda and the workshop topics of the Congress.

22. Informal consultations for the formulation of the draft text of a declaration in advance of the Thirteenth Congress will commence in October 2014, in close cooperation with the extended Bureau of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the focal point of the host Government in Vienna. Consultations with other organizations and entities will also take place in order to seek their support in advancing the aims of the Thirteenth Congress. Those organizations and entities will include relevant entities of the United Nations system

[8] www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime-congress/13-crime-congress.html.

(such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat and the Peacebuilding Commission); the development assistance community, including the United Nations Development Programme; intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations involved in areas related to those to be discussed at the Congress; and institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network.

23. In November 2014, an information circular will be sent to all Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and institutes of the United Nations crime prevention and criminal justice programme network announcing the dates, venue and provisional agenda of the Congress. The official invitations will be sent in January 2015.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations, including action required of the Commission

24. In its resolution 68/185, the General Assembly requested the Commission to accord sufficient time at its twenty-third session to reviewing the progress made in the preparations for the Thirteenth Congress, to finalize in a timely manner all outstanding organizational and substantive arrangements and to make its recommendations to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council.

25. In that connection, the following actions are required of the Commission:

(a) Approving the documentation for the Thirteenth Congress listed in paragraph 3 above;

(b) Making a decision as to whether any amendment to the rules of procedure for the Thirteenth Congress is needed;

(c) Making recommendations on the public information activities for the Thirteenth Congress, such activities to be undertaken in a timely manner in order to ensure that Governments, the relevant specialized agencies, United Nations entities, intergovernmental organizations, professional organizations and civil society organizations are fully aware of and participate in the Congress and the preparations for the Congress.